

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6679

INFO AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

UNCLAS GABORONE 0768

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SF, BC

SUBJECT: PROG YOUTHS VISIT BOTSWANA

1. THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE APPEARED IN THE JUNE 11 EDITION OF THE BOTSWANA DAILY NEWS. BEGIN TEXT:
FOUR MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH WING OF THE LIBERAL PROGRESSIVE PARTY OF SOUTH AFRICA ARE PAYING A FIVE-DAY VISIT TO BOTSWANA AS GUESTS OF THE RULING BOTSWANA DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

2. MEMBERS OF THE TOURING SIDE LED BY MRS. GILLIAN GODSELL ARE KENDAL JORDI, RICHARD LAUF AND JILL MCLLRAITH, WHO DELIVERED A GOODWILL MESSAGE FROM PARTY LEADER COLIN ENGLIN TO THE BDP. THE MESSAGE SAID THAT UNDER THE WISE LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT SIR SERETSE KHAMA, BOTSWANA HAD GROWN IN STATURE AMONGST THE NATIONS OF AFRICA AND THE WORLD.

3. MR EGLIN ADDED: YOU ENTERED INDEPENDENCE DETERMINED TO SHOW YOUR POWERFUL NEIGHBOR IT WAS POSSIBLE FOR WHITE AND BLACK
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AFRICANS TO LIVE TOGETHER IN HARMONY. YOU HAVE SUCCEEDED IN

SHOWING THAT THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED PROVIDED PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENTS RESPECT HUMAN DIGNITY.

4. INTERVIEWED IN GABORONE, THE TEAM SAID THEY HAD COME TO BOTSWANA TO MEET PEOPLE AND TO ASSURE THEM THAT THERE WERE SOME WHITE PEOPLE AND TO ASSURE THEM THAT THERE PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA WHO COULD OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE TO APARTHEID.

5. THEY SAID THEY HOPED SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE THE LAND FOR BOTH WHITE AND BLACK. "WE DON'T BELIEVE THAT APARTHEID IS THE SOLUTION TO SOUTH AFRICA'S PROBLEMS. WE WANT IT TO BE REPLACED BY A FEDERAL MULTI-RACIAL GOVERNMENT. WE ARE OPPOSED TO THE PRESENT SYSTEM OF APARTHEID," SAID ONE MEMBER.

6. HE SAID ALL PEOPLE IN SOUTH AFRICA HAVE TO INVOLVED IN THE WHOLE MACHINERY OF RUNNING THE COUNTRY. THE WHOLE OF THE PRESENT SYSTEM HAS TO CHANGE DRASTICALLY.

7. ASKED IF THEY WOULD FEEL AT HOME IF THE DETAINED LEADER OF THE BANNED SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL CONGRESS NELSON MANDELA WAS TO BE THE LEADER OF SOUTH AFRICA, THEY SAID IF HE WAS ELECTED BY THE MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE THEY WOULD NOT MIND. IN THEIR OPION MR. MANDELA WAS A BRILLIANT MAN WHO COULD MAKE A BRILLIAN LEADER.

8. THEY CONCEDED THAT MOST OF THE WHITES IN SOUTH AFRICA WERE OBSESSED BY THE FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN - THAT IS WHY THEY VIEWED THE IDEA OF SHARING POWER WITH THE BLACKS WITH A SENSE OF INSECURITY. THE WHITE MAN WAS TERRIBLY CONCERNED ABOUT MAINTAINING HIS IDENTITY AND CULTURE. BUT THE GROUP SAID THE ONLY WAY TO SOLVING SOUTH AFRICA'S PROBLEMS WAS TO EVOLVE A SYSTEM WHEREBY DIFFERENT CULTURES WOULD BE INTERWOVEN SO THAT PEOPLE OF ALL RACES COULD WORK TOGETHER.

9. BLACK MAJORITY DOES NOT MEAN THAT PEOPLE WOULD KILL EACH OTHER. IT CAN MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE IN IF PEOPLE WERE NOT DISCRIMINATED AGAINST, THEY SAID.

THE LEADER OF THE GROUP SAID IF THE PRESENT SYSTEM CONTINUED, THE ONLY ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE VIOLENCE. SHE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT THE APARTHEID POLICY WAS BOUND TO FAIL BECAUSE IT WAS "NOT BASED ON REALITY".

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QPM RECENTLY OTHER MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH WING OF THE PARTY VISITED MOZAMBIQUE AND GAZANKULU HOMELAND. WHILE IN BOTSWANA THEY WILL BE SHOWN AROUND PLACES OF SPECIAL INTEREST LIKE THE BOTSWANA MEAT COMMISSION AND THE BOTSWANA AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE. END TEXT.
BOLEN

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